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County Employment and Wages in New Mexico – Fourth Quarter 2017

In New Mexico's only large county, Bernalillo, employment edged up 0.2 percent from December 2016 to December 2017, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with 2016 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that the rate of employment growth in Bernalillo County ranked 302nd among the 346 largest U.S. counties. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 1.5 percent from December 2016 to December 2017 with 316 of the 346 largest U.S. counties registering increases. Midland, Texas, recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 11.5 percent over the year. Shawnee, Kan., and Caddo, La., had the largest over-the-year percentage decreases in employment among the largest counties in the U.S., with losses of 1.8 percent each.

Employment in Bernalillo County stood at 328,500 in December 2017, accounting for 40.2 percent of total employment in New Mexico. Nationwide, the 346 largest counties made up 73.0 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Bernalillo County was \$912 in the fourth quarter of 2017, ranking it 258th. Nationwide, 251 of the 346 large counties reported average weekly wages below the U.S. average of \$1,109. Cameron, Texas, reported the lowest weekly wage (\$652), followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$664) and Horry, S.C. (\$674).

Nationally, 95 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2017. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,576. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,439, followed by San Mateo, Calif., at \$2,341. Average weekly wages in the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif., were nearly four times the average weekly wage in the lowest-ranked county, Cameron, Texas (\$652).

The average weekly wage in Bernalillo County increased 1.8 percent from the fourth quarter of 2016 to the fourth quarter of 2017, ranking 288th among the largest U.S. counties. Nationally, average weekly wages rose 3.9 percent over the year, as 339 of the 346 largest counties registered increases. San Mateo, Calif., and Ada, Idaho, had the largest over-the-year percentage increases in average weekly wages, with gains of 11.5 percent each.

Among the 346 large U.S. counties, 7 experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease with a loss of 6.7 percent in average weekly wages.

Average weekly wages in New Mexico's smaller counties

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 32 counties in New Mexico with employment levels below 75,000. Two of these smaller counties had average weekly wages above the \$1,109 national average in the fourth quarter of 2017: Los Alamos (\$1,506) and Eddy (\$1,113). Catron County had the lowest average wage in the state at \$540 per week. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 33 counties in New Mexico were considered, 5 had weekly wages averaging \$599 or less, 12 averaged \$600 to \$674 per week, 8 reported wages from \$675 to \$749, and 8 had wages averaging \$750 or more. (See [chart 1](#).) The counties with the highest average wages were concentrated around the metropolitan areas of Albuquerque, Carlsbad, Farmington, Hobbs, Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and Silver City.

Additional statistics and other information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2016 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2017 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn16.htm.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2018 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, August 22, 2018.

QCEW Publication Acceleration and Conversion to Two Data Releases

The national QCEW publication process has accelerated for a more timely release. Beginning with the national fourth quarter 2017 release, QCEW data are now published in two parts. The current County Employment and Wages news release and associated data have been accelerated and published first. The full QCEW data release, with smaller county data contained in this release, occurs two weeks later.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 10.0 million employer reports cover 145.9 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the largest county in New Mexico, fourth quarter 2017

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	145,921.1	1.5	--	\$1,109	--	3.9	--
New Mexico	816.7	0.6	--	865	45	2.5	42
Bernalillo, N.M.	328.5	0.2	302	912	258	1.8	288

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in New Mexico, fourth quarter 2017

Area	Employment December 2017	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	145,921,109	\$1,109
New Mexico	816,733	865
Bernalillo	328,499	912
Catron	632	540
Chaves	21,127	693
Cibola	7,750	684
Colfax	4,359	644
Curry	17,742	720
De Baca	450	656
Dona Ana	71,461	740
Eddy	28,657	1,113
Grant	9,002	751
Guadalupe	1,473	590
Harding	170	677
Hidalgo	1,560	724
Lea	29,433	1,017
Lincoln	6,310	610
Los Alamos	16,274	1,506
Luna	7,031	662
McKinley	20,972	666
Mora	675	592
Otero	17,274	720
Quay	2,609	602
Rio Arriba	9,858	653
Roosevelt	5,924	666
Sandoval	30,267	769
San Juan	47,772	874
San Miguel	8,155	588
Santa Fe	61,251	931
Sierra	3,383	590
Socorro	5,234	715
Taos	11,229	626
Torrance	3,135	664
Union	1,383	656
Valencia	14,748	663

Footnotes

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2017

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	145,921.1	1.5	\$1,109	--	3.9	--
Alabama	1,955.3	1.1	928	36	2.9	32
Alaska	306.7	-1.2	1,052	19	1.5	51
Arizona	2,834.7	2.6	978	25	3.5	12
Arkansas	1,217.2	1.0	848	48	2.5	42
California	17,293.0	2.1	1,346	4	5.7	4
Colorado	2,653.3	2.5	1,133	10	4.3	9
Connecticut	1,689.7	0.3	1,317	5	2.2	46
Delaware	444.9	0.6	1,081	15	2.6	40
District of Columbia	769.0	0.9	1,812	1	2.7	37
Florida	8,712.0	2.0	975	26	3.4	16
Georgia.....	4,425.0	1.8	1,027	20	3.4	16
Hawaii.....	664.5	0.8	984	24	3.1	26
Idaho	712.4	3.0	857	46	7.1	1
Illinois	6,001.1	0.8	1,151	9	2.6	40
Indiana.....	3,057.8	1.1	915	38	3.6	11
Iowa	1,549.7	0.4	938	32	3.0	28
Kansas	1,390.3	0.4	894	41	1.9	49
Kentucky.....	1,903.8	0.5	892	42	2.1	47
Louisiana	1,918.8	0.4	933	35	2.1	47
Maine.....	610.3	1.2	884	43	3.4	16
Maryland.....	2,683.6	0.5	1,207	8	3.3	22
Massachusetts	3,582.2	1.3	1,411	3	4.4	8
Michigan	4,321.8	0.9	1,062	17	3.4	16
Minnesota.....	2,875.7	1.3	1,100	14	3.4	16
Mississippi.....	1,140.6	0.5	774	51	2.4	45
Missouri	2,809.5	1.0	945	31	2.9	32
Montana	461.4	1.0	843	50	2.7	37
Nebraska	980.9	0.9	901	39	3.0	28
Nevada	1,351.9	3.5	955	29	3.2	25
New Hampshire.....	661.3	0.7	1,132	11	3.7	10
New Jersey.....	4,106.9	1.6	1,262	6	1.8	50
New Mexico	816.7	0.6	865	45	2.5	42
New York	9,465.3	1.4	1,428	2	6.4	2
North Carolina	4,388.6	1.5	964	28	3.3	22
North Dakota	416.1	0.4	1,010	22	3.3	22
Ohio	5,409.2	0.8	973	27	3.1	26
Oklahoma	1,607.8	1.2	895	40	3.5	12
Oregon	1,900.4	2.0	1,014	21	4.5	7
Pennsylvania	5,870.4	1.2	1,075	16	3.5	12
Rhode Island	483.6	1.1	1,056	18	2.7	37
South Carolina.....	2,058.8	1.6	879	44	2.8	35
South Dakota.....	423.8	0.9	856	47	3.4	16
Tennessee	2,984.8	1.3	1,000	23	3.0	28
Texas	12,207.8	2.0	1,109	13	3.5	12
Utah	1,465.5	3.6	936	33	2.9	32
Vermont.....	314.7	0.5	919	37	2.5	42
Virginia.....	3,884.2	1.3	1,121	12	2.8	35
Washington.....	3,305.0	2.4	1,217	7	5.8	3
West Virginia	693.1	0.1	847	49	4.7	5
Wisconsin	2,872.6	1.0	951	30	3.0	28
Wyoming	267.5	0.6	935	34	4.6	6
Puerto Rico.....	887.0	-4.4	570	(3)	2.5	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	34.3	-11.1	827	(3)	7.7	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

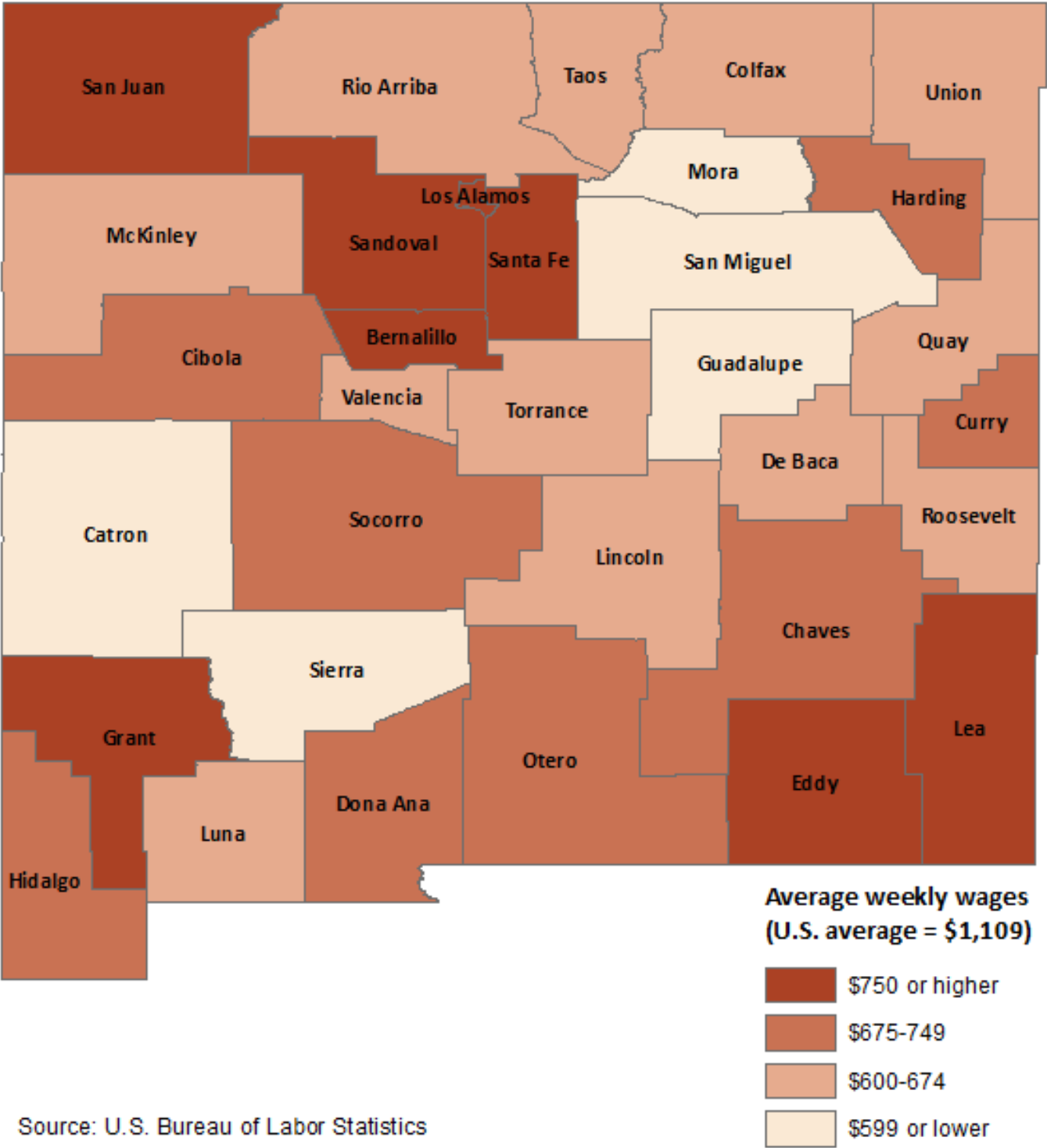
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in New Mexico, 4th quarter 2017



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics